

Basingstoke Observer

Thursday, February 15 - Wednesday, February 21, 2018

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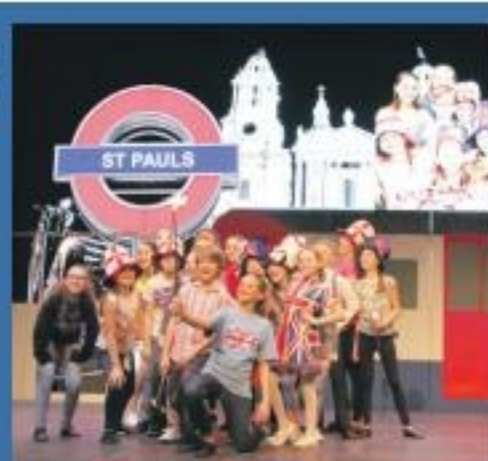
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Scouts bring music and dance with gang show

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FREE TAKE ONE

Sports club needs your help to win £200,000 for facilities

By Eva Astreinidou

'MAKE our dreams come true' is the plea from a sports club asking Basingstoke to get behind them in a bid to win £200,000.

The volunteer-run Basingstoke and Mid Hants Athletics Club has made it through to the final of a national competition and has just under 30 days to get the votes it needs to win the cash.

The funds will be used to improve the facilities at Down Grange Sports Complex, including building spectator seating, indoor facilities, changing rooms and trackside toilets.

But the club needs the public's backing and their votes to succeed.

In a video appeal posted online, a young member of the club says: "We have a lovely track and some great coaches but what we don't have are trackside facilities and somewhere to sit and watch in comfort."

"We have a wooden cabin and a fibre-glass kiosk. They have served us well but we dream of something better."

"It's not only our members who will benefit, local schools will benefit, and young athletes from nearby clubs and surrounding counties who come to the town to compete will benefit and we will be able to host bigger and better events."

"No more standing in the rain, no more sitting on the grass bank, no more slipping in the mud, no more getting changed in the wet. Please make our dreams come true."

The club is up against 29 other sporting contenders for the national prize,

which is available through a scheme run by Persimmon Homes.

BHMAC has raised more than £90,000 but the additional funding from the award will help build the shell of the stand.

"It [the money] would mean a whole lot to the families, the athletes and to the whole community"

Committee member Sue Scouler-Davison said athletes and their families worked hard to raise the funds, completing several physical challenges to help spread the word over the years.

She said: "It would mean a lot to the families, the athletes and to the whole community."

"I don't know if people appreciate how much hard work goes into athletics. You have got to train about four or five times a week in any weather conditions."

"But with the new facilities, we can improve that experience and even help avoid injuries by ensuring the athletes stay warmed up."

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has already approved planning permission for a new spectator stand as well as changing facilities at Down Grange.

The winner of the funding will be announced on March 22.

To vote before March 16, visit persimmonhomes.com/healthy-communities/finalists



Fairytale princesses help wishes come true

It's not everyday you meet fairytale princesses on the way to your Saturday morning shopping. The Basingstoke Cosplay Collective,

dressed as seven Disney and Pixar princesses dropped into Chineham Shopping Centre to put smiles on the faces of young children.

The group helped raise awareness for Make-a-wish foundation and collected more than £165 in the process on Saturday.

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Village homes approved with funding for schools

By Eva Astreinidou

NEARLY 50 new homes are set to be built in the village of Oakley.

The application from Wates Developments, will involve them contributing more than £300,000 towards improving infrastructure in the area.

The application for 48 homes at Park Farm includes 19 affordable homes, for rent or shared ownership, as well as pedestrian and cycle access and new allotments to go with the housing.

More than £240,000 of the Section 106 developer funds will go towards Oakley Infant and Junior Schools and more than £36,900 towards maintenance improvement at Oakley Park Cricket Club and the provision of an on-site kickabout area.

They will also be contributing £16,000 towards improvements to

footpaths, £7,000 towards the school travel plan, as well as 10 allotments with car parking provision.

Basingstoke and Deane councillors approved the plans after the developers submitted revisions to the original plans, which included moving access to the site further to the south of Station Road.

Oakley and North Waltham councillor Diane Taylor said the site was identified as a suitable area in the Oakley and Deane Neighbourhood Plan.

She said Hampshire Highways was satisfied after the developers revised the position of access after concerns over safety.

Speaking after the decision, Emma Gruenbaum, from Wates Developments said: "This proposal will deliver attractive new homes to meet identi-

fied housing need.

"Our ambition has always been to create a new space for the growing community with facilities to support its residents and to deliver this in a way that is sensitive to its rural environment.

"Wates Developments is delighted to have worked with all involved to gain support from the council and is excited about its role in assisting the delivery of the neighbourhood plan."

Original plans were not welcomed by many residents, with 14 letters of objection being submitted during consultation.

Residents expressed concerns over congestion, the building overlooking other properties which would lead to a loss of privacy and disturbance to existing residents.

Mad Hair Day has gone to their heads!

MAD Hair Day returned to Basingstoke for another year, providing the perfect excuse to sport the craziest of hairstyles and colours.

More than 20 schools took part in the event for St Michael's Hospice on Friday.

A spokesperson for the charity said they hope to have raised £8,000 from the fun campaign.

They added: "Mad Hair Day is a fun day, when you can get up and not worry about how your hair is looking when you go to work. This year we hope to raise £8,000 from the campaign and I can confidently say with all the support we have received we will be on track to achieve this target."

Oakridge Junior School embraced the day, with pupils donning bird's nests with a variety of objects in and hairspray of all colours to mark the day, in exchange for a £1 donation for the charity.



The school raised more than £300, with money still coming in.

Diane Charman, headteacher at Oakridge Federation, said: "We are proud to support Mad Hair Day for St Michael's Hospice once again this year. The children looked brilliant and had put lots of effort into the crazy and creative hairstyles witnessed across the federation. Thank you to everyone who took part."

**InBrief**

Testing out skills in mock rescue op

EMERGENCY services teams took part in a large scale mock rescue operation.



More than 20 search teams were deployed throughout the Winter Overture exercise earlier this month, responding to a variety of scenarios - searching for missing people, dealing with casualties, water rescues and casualty evacuation.

The exercise at the Swanwick Nature Reserve was organised by Hampshire Search and Rescue (HANTSAR), and included foot, dog and specialist water rescue teams.

The aim of the exercise was to help agencies across the south work better together.

The search and rescue teams are all volunteers, and they were joined by specialist teams from Hampshire Constabulary, South Central Ambulance Service, Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service and the coastguard service.

For further information on Hampshire Search and Rescue visit www.hantsar.org.

By-election names

THE nominations have been received for the Kempshott Ward by-election.

Tony Capon (Conservative), Grant Donohue (Labour) and Stavroulla O'Doherty (Liberal Democrat) are in the running for the position.

The election will be held on March 1 between 7am and 10pm.

The Kempshott ward seat became vacant following the death of long-serving councillor Rita Burgess in December at the age of 74.

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Grants will benefit those in need and the most vulnerable people

By Eva Astreinidou

ALMOST one million pounds has been granted to support vital work carried out by community and voluntary groups in Basingstoke and Deane.

The key focus of the funding was on making older people feel less isolated, supporting families from disadvantaged backgrounds and encouraging better physical and mental health.

The funds, totalling £916,000, will be granted over the next three years to support 13 projects under the community and voluntary sector grants scheme.

Speaking after the borough council's decision, Cllr Robert Tate said:

"We are fortunate to have so many dedicated community and voluntary organisations and groups in the borough that make such a difference to people's lives."

"These grants support a wide range of activities that will benefit people from across the borough, especially those that are most vulnerable."

Local projects that will benefit from the funding include the Basingstoke Disability Forum, who will now be able to expand their project helping people with disabilities access services, advice and support and to deliver this in more rural areas.

The YMCA will also now deliver the Y Pass scheme to teach life skills to vulnerable 18 to 25 year olds including those at risk of homelessness.

Other grants will go to Basingstoke NeighbourCare, Home-Start North West Hampshire and RCS Ltd who deliver the Be Confident to Work programme for unemployed adults facing specific challenges.

Other organisations benefitting include the Fluid Motion Theatre Company for the All In The Mind mental health arts festival and outreach programme, Age Concern Hampshire for the wellbeing and outreach and advice services for isolated older people, and the Brighton Hill Community Association's youth project.

In addition to the grants covering specific projects, the council is also giving £228,500 over the next three years in new strategic grants to help with the overall running of community organisations that provide specialist services integral to supporting the council's work.

These will go to Basingstoke Consortium, which helps prepare young people for the world of work, and Young People's Independent Counselling, which provides free mental health and wellbeing support for young people aged from 11 to 25.

InBrief

Sniffing out tobacco

CLEVER canines will be ready to sniff out illegal tobacco in Basingstoke tomorrow.

Hampshire County Council is hosting a roadshow at Top of the Town near Willis Museum from 9am to 3.30pm, inviting local residents to come and show support in tackling the problem.

At the event, three specialist detection dogs, Phoebe, YoYo and Scamp, and their handlers from B.W.Y Canine will demonstrate their skills in detecting hidden tobacco.

The events aim to raise awareness of the dangers of illegal tobacco and show how the trading standards team works to stop illegal tobacco sales which are a criminal offence.

Illegal tobacco products are either cigarettes or hand rolling tobacco, shisha or bidis, which have been smuggled, bootlegged or are counterfeit.

Planning opinions

RESIDENTS and businesses are being encouraged to have their say on how new homes are created.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has started a consultation on three documents covering a range of issues from the number of parking spaces created to the types and sizes of homes that should be built.

These documents provide detailed planning guidance explaining how the policies in the council's local plan will be used in making decisions on planning applications.

To comment before March 19, visit www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planning-policy-consultations.



Something for everyone at Gang Show

AN annual event showcasing the crème de la crème of young talent returned with a bang last week.

Now in its 26th year, the Basingstoke Gang Show will run until Saturday at The Haymarket.

The show had its opening night on Thursday, receiving praise from the audience and Mayor Paul Frankum.

The event showcases the talents of 68 boys and girls, who took on the challenge of learning lines and choreography to perform in front

of sold-out shows.

Steve Edney, who is chairing the event for the 24th time after six months of rehearsals, said: "What a night, what a performance. What makes this so great is that it's a combination of so many people who collaborate to create such high production values and a really fun experience for the audience and all of the cast and crew."

"From the moment the audience arrive we have cast in costumes creating drama and curiosity.

Then 19 acts in our show which provide joy and pleasure for all."

The show features more than 600 costumes, ranging from pop star Lady Gaga to barn-dancing cowboys, to be used in 19 different numbers.

This year's show is supporting charity Muffins Dream, which works with families who have a child or young adult with a disability or illness.

To book tickets visit www.anvilarts.org.uk.

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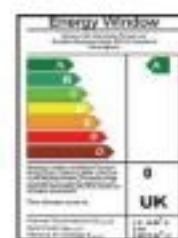
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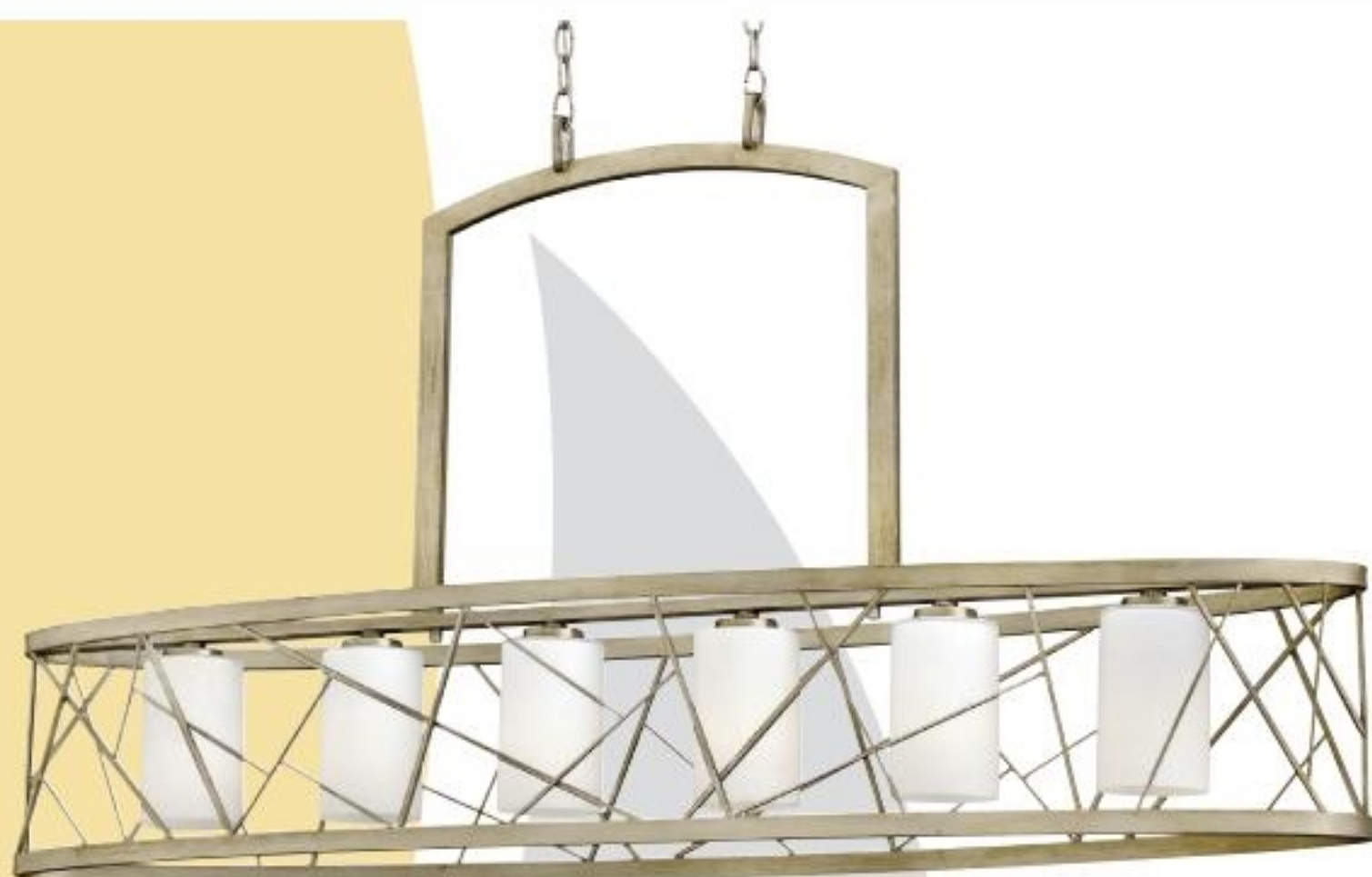


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Help community centre to prosper in the future

By Eva Astreinidou

A £760,000 community centre opened its doors over the weekend.

Visitors had the chance to check out the new facilities at Beggarwood on Saturday, which include a community café and spacious rooms for get togethers.

The launch event at Broadmere Road, Basingstoke, comes after significant funding from Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and developers' contributions.

The facility will be used by community groups and residents of all ages – whether it's for a class, an event or just a chat with friends over cakes and a cup of tea.

People will also be able to book the new facility for a range of activities or events such as birthday parties.

Borough councillor Simon Bound said: "The opening of this wonderful new centre is a real cause for celebration for the community in Beggarwood."

"I hope as many people as possible will enjoy making full use



Karen Coomber, chair of Hatch Warren and Beggarwood Community Association was one of many who enjoyed a drink at the new centre

of the facilities and take it from strength to strength."

Volunteers are now being sought to help manage the centre, which will be run by the association on a daily basis.

Cllr Bound added: "I would urge anybody who is interested in having their say on how the facility is managed to become a trustee or volunteer to help to ensure that

the centre continues to prosper in the years ahead."

Hatch Warren and Beggarwood Community Association aims to make the modern centre in Beggarwood Park the true heart of the community.

To volunteer as a trustee, contact Hatch Warren and Beggarwood Community Association on office@hatchwarren.org

Skate park almost ready to open



WORK on a highly-anticipated skatepark is nearly complete, after years of campaigning to bring the plans to life.

The new facility at Rooksdown Park will feature an array of ramps, steps and pipes as well as a solar-powered youth shelter that will allow users to play their music using speakers and a Bluetooth system.

The original idea for a skatepark was put forward by Rooksdown par-

ish councillor Jonathan Payne in 2014. He launched a petition to gain local support for the project.

Developers Bendcrete Leisure Ltd have now confirmed the work is due to be completed by the end of next week.

Rooksdown ward councillor and skatepark advocate Simon Bound said: "The whole community has been watching with interest the progress that is being made of the

much anticipated skate park. With most of the concrete laid the team are currently adding the protective rubber mulching strips, which look very much like the finishing touches.

"Everyone is looking forward to getting an opening event in the diary and looking to see if we can get some experienced sports people to attend so they can inspire young people in the area."

Employee tied up as thieves stole £5,000

A MAN was threatened with a hammer and tied up while thieves made off with £5,000.

Police are appealing for information after the 'frightening' incident at the McColl's store in Buckland Parade, Buckland Avenue.

At around 9.20 pm on February 4, an unknown man entered the Basingstoke store via the front door and threatened a 42-year-old male employee with a hammer.

Another man then entered the store via a rear door and together the two men used cable ties to restrain the employee.

They then made off with around £5,000 from safes in the store.

The victim was left shaken but was not injured in the incident.

The first man is described as white with tanned skin, of stocky build, around 6ft tall, with blue/grey-coloured eyes.

He is described as speaking with a north east accent, and was wearing a mid-length green hooded jacket, jogging bottoms, and a thick, chunky knit black balaclava.

The second man is described as around 5ft 6ins tall, of slim build, and wearing a wearing a tracksuit, possibly blue in colour.

If you can help, call police on 101 or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

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Are you sitting comfortably? Pupils enjoy story morning

CHILDREN in Basingstoke were spellbound by a morning of storytelling at their school.

Professional storyteller Cindylou Turner-Taylor captured the imagination of the pupils at Oakridge Infant School in Oakridge Road ahead of national storytelling week earlier this month.

Organised by housebuilder Barratt Homes, the children got a chance to learn new characters and further develop a love of reading.

Sophie Millington, deputy head-teacher at the school said: "It has been an incredible treat for our pupils.

"They were totally captivated by Cindylou and loved getting to know the characters she introduced us to.

"Listening to these stories was an excellent way to develop the love of being read to."

This comes as the housebuilder

launched several activities as part of an ongoing education programme.

Lynnette St-Quintin, director of sales and marketing for Barratt Homes Southern Counties, said: "We were pleased to support National Storytelling Week this year.

"As part of our programme, we actively promote learning experiences such as these and were delighted to arrange Cindylou's visit to the school."

Set up in 2000 by The Society for Storytelling, National Storytelling Week has been used to increase public awareness of the art, practice and value of storytelling.

Professional storyteller, Cindylou added: "Sharing stories between teller and listener feeds the imagination from one generation to the next and is a tradition that needs to be continued."



Pupils enjoyed listening to the stories read by Cindylou Turner-Taylor

Plan for 750 more homes in area

By Eva Astreinidou

A DEVELOPER has acquired land to build 750 more houses near a 350-home development it has already started.

Last month, developers Linden Homes confirmed it had exchanged contracts for 102 acres of land adjacent to its Longacre site in Basingstoke.

Known as Hounsome Fields, the site already has outline planning consent for 750 homes, 350 of which will be affordable properties, along with sports facilities, shops, a school and

a nursery.

But nearby residents are disappointed with the scale of the plans and fear for the future of the area.

Commenting on the plans online, Joanna Wheatley said: "Was looking forward to living directly next to the fields... but now it looks like we'll be living directly next to a building site."

Luke Dickenson said: "This is really annoying. Literally makes me want to reconsider moving there."

Jeremy Stewart added: "Good grief. Welcome to more cock-eyed planning

and consequent chaos in the area. Heaven help this town in the future."

The housebuilder said it is keen to expand its reach and provide further homes and facilities in the 'highly sought-after' commuter town.

They added that this latest move is a significant investment for the Thames Valley region, and comes as the housebuilder has acquired seven further sites across the country.

Located west of Winchester Road, the Hounsome Fields site is immediately south of Longacre.

Hounsome Fields is less than five miles from the centre of Basingstoke, and is within immediate reach of the M3 and A34.

Andrew Hammond, divisional chairman for Linden Homes, added: "We pride ourselves on delivering high quality family homes which form sustainable communities in well sought-after locations."

Work is pencilled to start on the Hounsome Fields site in late 2018, with homes launching for the following summer.

InBrief

Learn improv

DROP-IN comedy improvisation classes are being run in Basingstoke.

Nathan Improv, run by performance facilitator Nathan Keates, will run tomorrow from 7pm to 9pm in the White Hart on London Road.

The sessions will explore teaching, directing and coaching in improvisation and performance skills.

Beginners are welcome. Each session costs £5 per person.

Help out in village

ENJOY being active in your community? Then why not consider becoming a village agent in Kingsclere.

The role entails offering a few hours per week to volunteer for Age Concern Hampshire to signpost older people to local services and information.

For more information or to apply, contact villageagent@ageconcern-hampshire.org.uk

Writing advice

PICK up writing tips from top authors at Basingstoke Discovery centre's Fiction for All Tastes workshop.

Authors Helen Matthews and Abi Oliver will offer tips on the writing process, social media and getting published. The four-hour workshop on March 3 will include a mixture of discussion and writing exercises.

The event runs from 11am and tickets are £15. To book, visit www.hants.gov.uk/shop

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More than 50 firefighters
tackled the blaze at Bere Mill
Pictures: @whitchurch06



Fire destroys historic mill

MORE than 50 firefighters tackled a fire at an 18th century farmhouse and mill in Whitchurch.

The blaze on Tuesday last week tore through the ground floor, first floor of the historic farmhouse and roof of Bere Mill in London Road.

Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service sent 12 engines from around the region to tackle the fire at around 10.10pm.

London Road was closed due to the number of vehicles involved with relief crews arriving throughout the incident to take over from colleagues, working through the night.



Nobody was hurt in the fire.

Bere Mill was once used to make paper for some of the first British banknotes, and used to supply the Bank of England.

After the incident, Whitchurch Fire Station tweeted: "A mill of Saxon origin with a significant & proud history. Thoughts with the owners."

Families mourn loss of popular farm park

By Eva Astreinidou

THE decision to close a popular family fun park will be a 'huge loss' to Basingstoke.

Manydown Family Fun announced that the park, based at Scrapps Hill Farm, will not be opening this year as it is no longer 'financially viable'.

In a statement released on Facebook last week, the organisers said they have had eight 'wonderful' years operating at the site.

The statement read: "It's with great sadness that we have decided not to continue. We have enjoyed every minute."

"The investment needed to maintain the high standards we've striven to meet is unfortunately no longer viable."

Manydown Family Fun hosted days out at its Easter lambing

events and the summer maize maze over the last few years.

They added: "We'd like to thank all the loyal families who have supported us over the years and kept coming back time and time again."

Commenting on Facebook, Sarah Robson said: "Such an absolute shame, my little one grew up here every holiday."

Charlotte Shadey added: "What sad news to be reading we have enjoyed your farm for years and have brought many new families with us and had some fab family times and memories. Thank you to all the staff who worked so hard to make such a fun enjoyable place to visit."

Another supporter said the decision to close the park is due to plans to build housing in the area.

Commenting on the news, the

visitor said: "It is all for money and housing, no priority for our children and grandchildren who have always loved this place for many years."

Mark Drummond, who owns the land with his brother, said: "There will of course be cynical viewpoints, but it was just a matter of no longer having that commercial viability anymore."

"The decision was not to do with planning, as there was time left on the lease."

Katie Westwood, marketing manager at Manydown farm shop which is based at Scrapps Hill Farm, said: "We've maintained a close relationship with the Drummonds since buying the farm shop business from them in 2012 and therefore know this would not have been a decision they made lightly."

Projects are all winners with Lottery funding

ARTS, sports, heritage and community projects were among those to benefit from more than £795,000 in National Lottery funding last year.

In total, 19 grants were awarded in Basingstoke in 2017 and this year those organisations have the chance to gain an extra £5,000.

Among the projects to receive funding locally included £15,949 to Fluid Motion Theatre Company for the All in the Mind Festival; £6,967 to Wealers Social Club for

IT equipment and digital training and £9,120 to the Wessex Heritage Trust for specialist dementia equipment.

By entering The National Lottery Awards 2018, groups which have been awarded Lottery cash will be in the running to pick up £5,000 in the annual search for the UK's favourite Lottery-funded projects.

Winners will receive the cash at a ceremony to be broadcast on BBC One later in the year.

Projects can be nominated for a National Lottery Award in seven categories – arts, education, environment, health, heritage, sport and voluntary/charity to reflect the breadth of funding the National Lottery invests in.

To enter your favourite project in this year's National Lottery Awards, tweet @LottoGoodCauses with your suggestions or call 0207 2933599.

Entries must be received by midnight on April 6.

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Midwife's labours earn award

By Karen Neville

A MIDWIFE who went above and beyond the line of duty to care for a mum-to-be has taken delivery of a special award.

Lucy Edwards, a community midwife at Basingstoke Hospital, scooped the prize for her care of a woman who was diagnosed with cancer during two of her pregnancies.

She was one of the WOW! Award winners honoured by Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust at its fifth annual awards gala ceremony on Tuesday last week.

Honours for the overall WOW! Awards winners for the year were handed out in nine categories with Lucy claiming the Family and Clinical Support Services Division Award.

Not only did the midwife support the woman through her pregnancies and

ensure all relevant staff were aware of her condition, she supported the woman through labour by going into the hospital while she was on annual leave and also arranged for the family to receive donated breast milk.

Lucy said: "I adored caring for this woman, so coming in when I should have been on annual leave to help her deliver her baby was something that I didn't think twice about."

"It was important to both of us that I provided continuity of care for her, to make sure she was happy and comfortable."

"I spent a lot of time with the family because of their specific situation and even though the babies have been born, I still keep in touch with them."

"I did not expect to win a WOW! Award in the first place, let alone win the annual divisional award. I'm incredibly proud and it is a real high-

light of my career so far."

Other award winners from Basingstoke Hospital included the entire team from E1 Ward who won the Chairman's Award for their nursing back to health of a severely ill woman over the course of seven weeks. They were nominated by the patient's husband who was touched by their care for him as well during this time.

Diabetic nurse Gill Lloyd won a special prize from the WOW! Awards for the way she has looked after a particular patient during his 20 years with the condition.

Liz Padmore, chairman of Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, congratulated the winners, saying: "I know many of you here tonight consider what you do to be all in a day's work and are modest about your achievements, but I encourage you to be proud of your contribution."



Lucy Edwards cared for a mum-to-be with cancer

Mosque opens to community

A MOSQUE in Basingstoke opened its doors to residents to showcase the town's 'fantastically diverse' community.

An open day at the Albirr Mosque on Sunday encouraged people of all backgrounds to come along to find out more about the Islamic faith and meet new people.

Residents of any creed were invited to the event, which also included a guided tour and an exhibition giving visitors an insight into the history of

the religion. Manuscripts and artefacts were on display to showcase the background of the faith in the community.

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's Cllr Simon Bound said: "Basingstoke is a fantastic culturally diverse borough and this is a great opportunity to learn more about this faith and to meet new people."

Right, the Mosque's Imam, Mohammed Achbib welcomes Mayor Paul Frankum and MP Maria Miller to the open day



InBrief

Fostering advice

A FOSTER agency in Basingstoke is holding an event to inform people about the benefits and rewards of fostering.

Blue Sky Fostering is giving people a chance to speak to a current carer, who can give a real account of the process of becoming a foster parent, on February 27.

If you have a spare bedroom, a driving licence with access to a car, and want to make a difference to a local young person's life, then come along.

To sign up, visit <https://tinyurl.com/ybzxqgw>.

Tag a tile at Vyne

THERE is still time to tag-a-tile and help raise money for a £5.4m roof project.

National Trust property The Vyne near Basingstoke is approaching the completion of its lengthy renovation work, due to be unveiled in the summer.

Organisers are now asking that people take the opportunity to make their mark on the former Tudor palace before time runs out on February 28.

Visitors can write a message or draw a picture on a tile to go on the new roof for a suggested donation of £5.

>> Strictly star hotfoots it to The Anvil
Page 18





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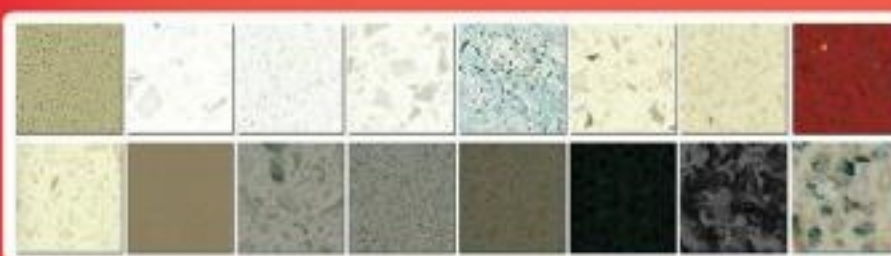
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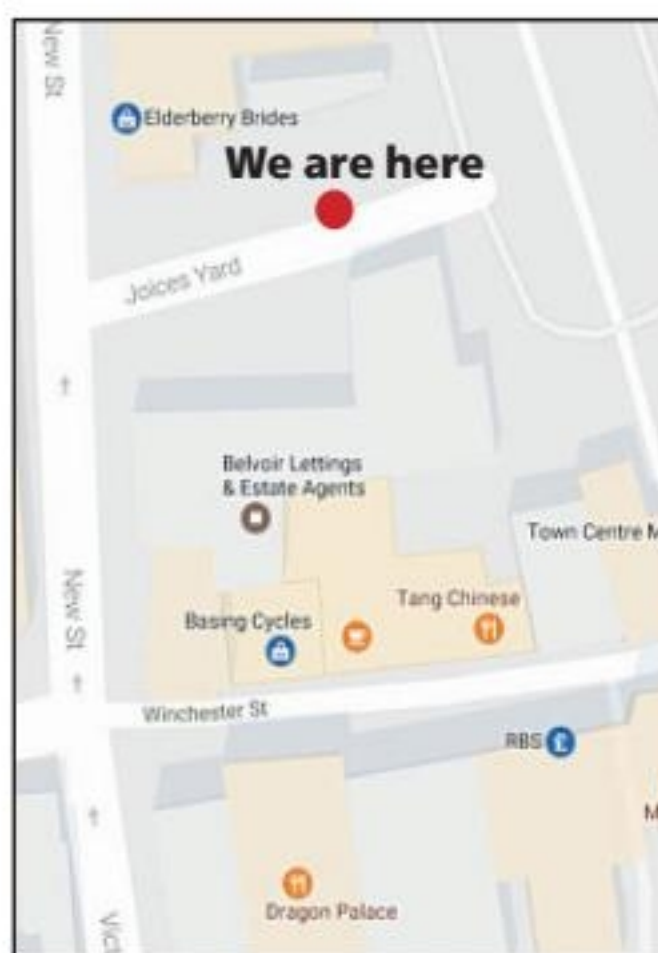
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PROPERTYWEEKLY

Three big changes landlords should be aware of in 2018

If you are a landlord or hoping to become one soon, we highly recommend reviewing these three upcoming changes which could not only affect your compliance but also your profits.

1 Mortgage Interest Tax Relief

As many of you will be aware, from April 2017, the Government began phasing out the tax relief you can claim on their mortgage repayments. This year, you can claim up to 75% tax relief on your mortgage repayments. If you haven't done so already, we strongly recommend talking to a financial advisor about the impact these changes may have on your portfolio.

2 Minimum energy efficiency standards

As of the 1st April 2018, all let properties must have a minimum 'E' rating on their energy efficiency

By Romans Group

certificate. Although there are a few exceptions to the rule, generally, any property which scores below an 'E' cannot legally be let to new tenants or, re-let to the existing tenants.

3 Changes to mortgage applications for landlords

Lenders will now take into account all properties in your portfolio not just the one the mortgage relates to in a bid to reduce lending to high-risk landlords. To better increase your chances of a successful mortgage application we recommend working with an expert to create a business plan.

To find out more about the different service levels we offer our landlords, contact us on 01344 985 870.



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Competition

WIN tickets to the Photography Show

The Photography Show, the event for everyone passionate about photography and moving image, returns to the NEC Birmingham from 17-20 March 2018 featuring the latest kit from big brands and a jam-packed speaker line-up.

Get hands-on with new products from Canon, Epson, Fujifilm, Hasselblad, Manfrotto, Nikon, Olympus, Panasonic, Sigma and Sony to name a few, plus tripods, albums and accessories you didn't even know existed from over 220 exhibitors.

The Great Outdoors, a new stage for 2018, will feature live demos and expert advice on image capture outside, including dramatic landscapes, getting close to nature and special occasions whatever the weather. The enhanced Mobile & Social Stage will offer the opportunity to explore mobile imaging technologies and how social media can make (or break) a photographer, and the dedicated Video Stage will showcase cutting-edge products alongside technical and creative help on how to get the best out of moving image production skills.

Plus, catch exciting live action tutorials on the Live Stage, find out about intriguing photography projects and techniques in Behind the Lens,

Closing date: Thursday, March 1

discover how drones can enhance your projects in the Drone Zone and hear thrilling insights into the journeys of world-renowned photographers at the Super Stage and more!

For more information, please visit: www.photographyshow.com/pr_1

Get your ticket

To guarantee that you'll be at the show in March, you can buy tickets to the show by visiting www.photographyshow.com/pr_1. Tickets to Super Stage sessions, masterclasses and for the VIP package are limited so book early to avoid disappointment.

Win tickets!

The Basingstoke Observer has teamed up with The Photography Show to offer 5 lucky readers and their 'plus one' the chance to attend 2018's most exciting photography

event, absolutely free!*

To be in with a chance of winning, just answer the following simple question:

Q: Where will you be able to find out more about how drones can be used?

Tickets are limited to one pair per winner and are valid for one day only. So what are you waiting for? Send your entry today!

*Free tickets are for entry to the show plus a selection of theatre and stage programmes. Additional tickets must be purchased for the Masterclasses, Super Stage sessions and VIP upgrades.

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Lights, camera, ballroom...

By Josh Cox

FORMER Strictly Come Dancing champion Pasha Kovalev is putting on his dancing shoes again to bring The Magic of Hollywood to The Anvil.

The show, created by Pasha and his long-time dance partner Anya Garnis, will be jam packed with sequins and glamour as Pasha takes to the stage with a host of sensational dancers to perform routines to a Hollywood theme.

Pasha arrived in the UK in 2011 as one of the professionals on Strictly Come Dancing. His first celebrity partner was actress Chelsee Healey and they soon became the nation's favourites when they were runners up to the coveted title.

In the following years, Pasha was partnered with celebrities including Kimberley Walsh, Rachel Riley, Naga Munchetty, Carol Kirkwood, Chizzy Akudolu and, of course, won the Strictly Trophy in 2014 with television presenter Caroline Flack.

After the huge success of his tours Life Through Dance, It's All About You and Let's Dance The Night Away over the last few years, Pasha will be showcasing an evening of singing,

dance and much more.

Pasha said: "Every year is a new show. This show, The Magic of Hollywood is inspired by Hollywood movies and music.

"There will be a range of styles from Sinatra to modern day singers.

"It's very family orientated with something for everyone. There will be local dance studios getting involved which adds a new dimension, and of course, there will be lots of sparkles.

"If you love dance, this is one show not to miss."

At The Anvil, Pasha will be dancing with pupils from Lynden School of Dance; giving the opportunity to showcase the talented youth from the local area.

Tickets for the show on April 24 cost £26.50; there is a pre-show meet and greet available for the cost of £20.

For more information or for tickets, call the Anvil Arts box office on 01256 844244, or visit the website anvilarts.org.uk.



On stage

Dan's the man

Irish country star Dan McHugh performs at the Irish Centre in Basingstoke on February 23.

McHugh returns to Basingstoke due to popular demand to play mainly Irish and country but also some rock and roll and pop classics.

The free gig starts at 9pm.

Fancy a sing song?

Stars In Their Minds Karaoke is back at The Beacon in Basingstoke on February 23.

Whether you love singing classics by Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley, or maybe you are a modern pop fan or rocker, they will be something for everyone.

The karaoke will run from 8pm till late, with free entry.

Come together

Dynamic four piece rock band Black Dog are to play at The Swan in Sherborne St John on February 24.

Expect an evening of rock and roll covers from the 60s to present day, covering artists such as Free, Deep Purple, The Beatles, Thin Lizzy and many more.

The free gig starts at 8.30pm.

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Entertainment & Leisure

Fighting to put on a brave face

By Josh Cox

VAMOS Theatre has teamed up with Mercury Theatre Colchester and London International Mime Festival, to present A Brave Face at The Haymarket later this month.

The production begins in Afghanistan, 2009. Under bright blue skies, a small girl stands and watches the soldier. She smiles, just like his sister.

Ryan is there to see the world, learn a trade, get a life. Training is complete, combat is a buzz; he's part of a team, and knows his job. But on one particular hot and desperate tour of duty, Ryan sees things he can't talk about, to anyone. And then, when he returns home, the trouble really begins.

A Brave Face explores Post Traumatic Stress, an unseen and often unrecognised injury of war, and the impact it can have on even the closest of families.

It has been created from more than two years of extensive research into Post Traumatic Stress in the military, talking and working with ex- and serving soldiers and their families, as well as mental health practitioners, journalists, and staff from organisations such as Help for Heroes, and

The mask-style production of A Brave Face will tackle the often taboo subject of Post Traumatic Stress



the pioneering Recovery Centre, Chavasse VC House.

With compassion and fearlessness, Vamos will bring its trademark of wordless, full-mask theatre to tell the story that needs to be told.

A Brave Face is suitable for audi-

ences aged 12 years and over and is accessible to hearing and deaf audiences alike. The performance will run for approximately 75 minutes with no interval.

The show is on Wednesday next week and starts at 7.30pm.

Tickets for A Brave Face are priced at £12, which includes a £2 booking fee.

For more information or to book tickets, call the Anvil Arts box office on 01256 844244, or visit anvilarts.org.uk.

On stage

This is the day...

That'll Be The day are gearing up to put on the 'rock show of the year' at The Anvil this Sunday.

Highly acclaimed for their stunning live entertainment value, the show promises to be an outstanding celebration for all fans of the golden era of popular music.

Tickets are £27. The show begins at 7.30pm.

Moon River trip

Jimmy Osmond is bringing his new show, Moon River and Me, to The Anvil on Thursday next week.

The show will pay tribute to Andy Williams and who had great influence on Jimmy's career. The show will be full of award-winning music, nostalgic footage and special memories of Andy.

Tickets range from £29.50 to £32.

O'what a treat

The Forge, Basingstoke will host Northern Irish musician Damien O'Kane on Thursday next week.

Damien grew up in Coleraine with a deep respect and understanding of the folk tradition, yet also a healthy appetite to explore its broadest borders and test its boundaries.

Tickets cost £17.50.

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Competition

WIN tickets to The Grinning Man

To Celebrate The Extension Of The Grinning Man, You Can Win Tickets To See The Show

Following its hugely successful premiere at Bristol Old Vic, the critically acclaimed new musical The Grinning Man has recently extended its run in the West End and "demands to be seen" (The Times).

From Tony Award-winning director Tom Morris (War Horse), Kneehigh writer Carl Grose and featuring "an outstanding score" (Sunday Times) by Tim Phillips and Marc Teitler, The Grinning Man is a magical reimagining of the classic novel by Victor Hugo (Les Misérables).

Closing date: Sunday, February 18

A strange new act has arrived at the fairground. Who is Grinpayne and how did he get his hideous smile? Paraded as a freak, then celebrated as a star, only the love of a sightless girl can reveal his terrible secret.

Set in a fantastical world created by designer Jon Bausor (Bat Out of Hell), and brought to life with the "astounding puppetry" (What's on Stage) of Gyre & Gimble, the original War Horse puppeteers, The Grinning Man invites

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Mazda CX-5 – 2.2 150ps SE-L Nav SKYACTIV -D 2WD

Full of love for 'frankly staggering' Mazda

By **Tony Yates**

FOR this week's road test, I am in the brilliant Mazda CX-5. And for reasons I can't explain, I'm going to come right out and say it. 'I love it'.

Yes I know I seem to be saying this a lot lately, but it's true. Or maybe it's my age showing here, which might not be a good thing. Anyway, the facts are the Mazda CX-5 is a decent car with plenty to offer.

Honestly, what Mazda has done here is produce a quality product for the right amount of money without skimping on quality or equipment – plus it has pretty much everything you will ever need.

I mean, look at the MX-5 as the perfect example; it's still one of the best 2-seater sports cars you can buy for around the same price as a decent family hatchback.

So once more just for the record, the Mazda CX-5 is a 'frankly staggering' machine, and one of the main reasons why I told my own mother to buy one, which, is exactly what she did.

Power & efficiency

Under the bonnet, you will find a 2.2-litre Turbo-diesel, four-cylinder in line, DOHC 16 valve engine that has 150ps at 4,500rpm and 380Nm of torque. Add in a 0-62 time of just over nine seconds and a top speed of around 127mph. You must also be thinking I bet it's thirsty with that big 2.2-litre engine. Actually, you won't need to visit the pumps any sooner than a normal hatchback – because the CX-5 can easily achieve 55mpg on the combined cycle.

On the road

The CX-5 feels planted and handles brilliantly into the corners. The steering is also very accurate and gives you great feedback - while the suspension also manages to soak up all the bumps and potholes with ease.

There was also very little body roll which was yet another sign of the chassis doing an excellent job of keeping everything under control. I think the CX-5 is a proper peach to



drive, not only because it feels fun to drive, but also because it feels like Mazda really has put some thought into how it performs, which is always the most important part.

Design & technology

Some of the standard features you

will find come in the form of; 17" alloy wheels, LED headlights including LED daytime running lights, LED front fog lights, adaptive front lighting system, dusk-sensing lights, heated, auto power-folding door mirrors, front and rear parking sensors, Black cloth seat trim, driver and front passenger seat height adjustment, rear seat

recline, leather-wrapped steering wheel, 40/20/40 fold flat rear seats, electronic parking brake, rain-sensing front wipers, cruise control, front and rear electric windows, dual-zone climate control air-conditioning, engine start / stop button, 7" Colour touch-screen display and multimedia commander and a AM / FM / DAB radio with 6 speakers.

Plus; Integrated navigation system with 3-years free European map updates, advanced Smart City Brake Support, driver and passenger front, side and curtain airbags, Dynamic Stability Control and Traction Control System, Hill Hold assist and ISOFIX child seat anchorages.

To sum up

The CX-5 really is a brilliant car which also happens to be one of the best looking too. Mazda really has done a fantastic job here and the CX-5 is now well above any of its rivals and the only compact SUV you need to be thinking about looking at.

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Birthday to remember for Rhys

By Owen Hughes

BASINGSTOKE Town players were outnumbered 10 to four on Saturday as the Dragons were put through their paces by a group of nine and 10 year olds.

Birthday boy Rhys Polhrcary celebrating his ninth birthday was left disappointed after the referee called off the Southern League One clash with Bishop's Stortford at the Camrose due to a waterlogged pitch.

But that disappointment soon turned to joy as four of 'Stoke's finest turned out for a kick about with the birthday party.

Aaron Nicholson, assistant head of youth and community at the Club, said: "Part of the birthday package is that you get to meet the players, go on as a mascot and then watch the game."

"I went into the changing rooms and asked if there were any players who would be happy to come down and four of them straight away were like 'yeah that's fine, we'll come and do it'."

"The kids really enjoyed it. It was

only a little kick about for a birthday party but when the players got there, suddenly they were taking it quite seriously and all screaming for the ball.

"When you've got footballers coming down to play with you, no matter who it is, it's always exciting."

"As soon as the game was called off, the players were allowed to go home, but fair play to them going out on the pitch as it was tipping it down."

■ There were further setbacks for Basingstoke off the pitch after it was revealed during Tuesday's Community Club meeting that the team's move to Winklebury has hit a snag.

Basingstoke will continue to play at the Camrose for the first half of next season with the owners' approval after a delay in a new state of the art artificial grass pitch at Winklebury.

Community Club secretary Steve Williams said at the meeting that "all signs were positive about the move" and the delay "should be seen as an opportunity to maximise funding". Basingstoke remain



13th on 42 points ahead of the trip to Redditch on Saturday (17th) and will play the rearranged fixture with Bishop's Stortford on Tuesday March 20 at 7.45pm.

First teamers Sam Smart, Jordan Goater, Harry Long and Dan Collier joined the birthday celebrations for nine-year-old Rhys Polhrcary after Saturday's game was cancelled

Sport Bites

Buffalo spooked

ICE HOCKEY: Lowly Basingstoke Buffalo conceded eight or more goals for the seventh time this season with a heavy 8-3 defeat at home to Peterborough Phantoms.

The unplayable Connor Stokes, who netted five of Peterborough's goals, ripped the Buffs apart in Saturday's game.

Goals from Mark Austen, Neil Leary and Blair Dubyk could not prevent the development side from slipping to their ninth straight defeat.

'Stoke travel to Invicta, who are one place and two points above them in the South2 division, on Saturday.

Game postponed

FOOTBALL: Tadley Calleva slipped to third in the Wessex Division One after their game at home to Christchurch on Saturday was postponed.

Only three of the 10th-tier's fixtures went ahead, with bad weather also calling off Whitchurch United's home game against Downton.

Laverstock & Ford's game did go ahead and their 5-0 win at New Milton Town helped them overtake Tadley.

Tadley face Verwood Town and Andover New Street on Saturday and Tuesday respectively while Whitchurch visit Folland Sports on Saturday.

Injury-hit Tigers

RUGBY: Tadley Tigers sacrificed their place in the Southern Counties Vase after forward pack injuries forced them to pull out of their semi final tie against Dorchester.

This means Dorchester progress to the final against Slough, top of the Berks, Bucks and Oxon league, on February 24.

Tadley will be looking to regroup before their next game at Wheatley on March 3.

Skater steps up

ICE SKATING: Nine-year-old figure skater Ava Mae Wilson has qualified for the British National Development Squad.

The Basingstoke skater was selected after reaching the National Ice Skating Association's strict age and skills criteria which included achieving a high level technical score in a national competition and demonstrating her competency in a number of difficult double jumps.

Wilson will attend her first intensive training camp later this month in Sheffield.

Battling through the elements to earn vital away win

HARTLEY Wintney continued their fine run of form to hold onto their playoff place spot with a vital 1-0 away win at AFC Dunstable on Saturday.

Battered by the wind, snow and hail storms, Hartley powered through the difficult conditions to secure all three points over their promotion rivals

thanks to Stow's 25-yard thunderbolt free kick.

The Row have now won seven of their last eight league games with four of those victories coming on the road.

Both sides were evenly balanced in the first half with the Row having the slightly favourable chances, despite

playing against the wind.

Liam Eagle and Jake Baxter came closest to opening the scoring in the first 45 minutes before the deadlock was finally broken in the second half.

Hartley took the lead on 66 minutes with a sensational dead-ball strike from Stow.

The home side squandered two

late chances in the final throws of the game but the Row held on for the win.

Hartley move up to fifth in the Evo-Stik League South East on 54 points.

The local derby against Fleet Town on Tuesday was called off.

The Row will look to continue their fine away winning streak against Arlesey Town on Saturday.

Skier set to make Olympic debut on South Korean slopes

ELITE level skier Laurie Taylor will make his Winter Olympics debut later this month on the slopes in PyeongChang.

Laurie, 22, is one of the youngest members of the British team hoping to achieve their best ever finish at a Winter Olympics.

The Basingstoke-based alpine skier will compete in the slalom event on Thursday next week.

Although this will be Laurie's first taste of the Winter Olympics, it is not the first time he has been called up to team GB.

In 2013, Laurie was selected for the national team that competed at the European Youth Olympic Games in Brasov, Romania.

Laurie started skiing at six years old on a family holiday which led to him joining the Aldershot Ski Race Team three years later.

He was soon called up to train at the British Sky Academy in Les Houches, France at just 10 years old.

Laurie finished 15th in the British Championships Super Combined in 2012, before improving for a ninth place finish in the French Junior Championships Slalom a year later.

Charlie Guest, Alex Tilley and World Cup silver medallist Dave Ryding will also be competing for Team GB on the slalom in South Korea.

Laurie will be live on BBC1 and Eurosport from 1am on February 22.



Laurie Taylor will join four other alpine skiers for Team GB in South Korea
Picture: Vanessa Fry Photography

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Inside: Skier set to make his Olympic debut | Town's Winklebury move delayed | Vital victory firms up play-off spot for Row

Bison fired up by nine goal win after taming Wildcats

By George Welch

BASKING in the glory of a huge win over fellow title challengers Swindon Wildcats and charging to their biggest home win of the season against Cardiff Fire, head coach Doug Sheppard praised "another great weekend" for Basingstoke Bison.

Bison fought back from a goal down to win 5-2 at the Wildcats on Saturday before thumping the Fire 9-0 at Planet Ice the following day.

Speaking after another four-point weekend, Sheppard described the win over Swindon, who started the weekend just four points behind the Hampshire side, as "huge".

"Saturday night character comes to mind as we had quite a few guys playing injured to help us get the win," he said.

"We stood up and played big. Swindon is a difficult place to go and get a positive result so it was a huge win."

Basingstoke fell behind to an Edgars Bebris strike on 11 minutes but ended the first session level following a Roman Malinik goal a minute before the end.

The away side wreaked havoc in a destructive middle period as Josh Smith (24 minutes), Dan Davies (27) and Ivan Antonov (36) struck for a 4-1 advantage.

Chris Jones pulled one back for Swindon at the start of the final third but Tomas Karpov made sure Bison had the last say with a goal 58 seconds from the end.

Sheppard used the game against Cardiff, who have now lost all 27 games this season, to rest some players and experiment.

It would have been easy for Bison regardless of the side they put out.

Grant Rounding (5 & 8), Davies (25 & 36) and Oscar Evans (19 & 29) enjoyed their afternoon, each netting a brace.

Karpov (7), Paul Petts (28) and skipper Aaron Connolly (38) also got their names on the score sheet in the 9-0 thrashing over Cardiff.

While Bison won both their weekend games, Swindon lost both of theirs, handing Sheppard's side an eight-point cushion over the third-placed side.

However, second-placed Peterborough Phantoms celebrated a four-point weekend of their own and remain level on points with 'Stoke having played a game more.

Bison host Bracknell Bees (5th) on Saturday and travel to London Raiders (4th) the following day.

Dan Davies scored three goals for Basingstoke Bison at the weekend, his 17th, 18th and 19th goals of the season



Picture: grantkingphotography.com

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